

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows without prejudice. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments.

We claim:

Claim 1 (Currently amended) A computer implemented method for selecting rules from a rules repository to validate information submitted on an electronic form comprising the steps of:

a) creating a validation rules repository on a computer, the repository having the software instructions that implement validation rules linked to records in the repository that correspond to each validation rule;

b) in response to receiving a connection request, establishing a connection with the created rules repository;

c) receiving a rule request;

d) receiving a validation rule description;

e) searching the rules repository for rules matching the rule description;

f) determining whether there are any rules that match the validation rule description;

g) sending a query to the user to create a new rule when no rule matches the validation rule description and storing the created rule in the rules repository; and

h) retrieving the selected rule from the rules repository for incorporation into the electronic form- and

i) automatically installing software instructions that execute the selected validation rule.

Claim 2 (Previously presented) The method as described in claim 1 further comprising before said retrieving step (h) the step of displaying at least one rule from the rules repository in response to a rule request.

Claim 3 (Original) The method as described in claim 2 wherein said step (a) further comprises establishing a plurality of categories of rules and storing the rules in the plurality of categories according to rule type.

Claim 4 (Original) The method as described in claim 3 wherein rule categories comprise alphabet and number categories.

Claim 5 (Original) The method as described in claim 3 wherein rule types comprise name, zip code, telephone number, city, state and address, and credit card number.

Claim 6 (Original) The method as described in claim 3 wherein said displaying step further comprises displaying a category of validation rules.

Claim 7 (Original) The method as described in claim 6 further comprising before said displaying step, the step of receiving the rule request containing an identification of a specific validation rules category.

Claim 8 (Original) The method as described in claim 7 wherein said displaying step further comprises displaying only rules from the identified validation rules category.

Claim 9 (Original) The method as described in claim 8 wherein said rule retrieval step further comprises receiving an identification of a rule in the specific validation rules category and retrieving the identified rule from the rules repository.

Claim 10 (Previously presented) The method as described in claim 1 wherein said step (h) further comprises the steps of: receiving a description of a desired rule; displaying all rules matching the rule description; and retrieving a rule selected from the displayed rules matching the rule description.

Claim 11 (Canceled)

Claim 12 (Previously presented) The method as described in claim 1 further comprising the step of storing the newly created rule in the rule repository.

Claim 13 (Previously presented) The method as described in claim 1 further comprising after said step (h), the step of incorporating the retrieved rule into the electronic form.

Claim 14 (Currently amended) The method as described in claim 13 wherein said incorporating step further comprises:

identifying a field in the electronic form;
attaching the selected rule to the identified form field; ~~and~~
retrieving validation software for the attached rule; and
automatically installing the retrieved validation software for an attached rule.

Claim 15 (Canceled)

Claim 16 (Canceled)

Claim 17 (Canceled)

Claim 18 (Canceled)

Claim 19 (Canceled)

Claim 20 (Canceled)

Claim 21 (Canceled)

Claim 22 (Canceled)

Claim 23 (Currently amended) A computer program product in a computer readable storage medium for selecting rules from a rules repository to validate information submitted on an electronic form comprising the steps of:

a) instructions creating a validation rules repository on a computer, the repository having the software instructions that implement validation rules linked to records in the repository that correspond to each validation rule;

b) in response to receiving a connection request, instructions establishing a connection with the created rules repository;

c) instructions receiving a rule request;

d) instructions receiving a validation rule description;

e) instructions searching the rules repository for rules matching the rule description;

f) instructions determining whether there are any rules that match the validation rule description;

g) instructions sending a query to the user to create a new rule when no rule matches the validation rule description and storing the created rule in the rules repository; and

h) instructions retrieving the selected rule from the rules repository for incorporation into the electronic form; ~~and~~

i) automatically installing software instructions that execute the selected validation rule.

Claim 24 (Previously presented) The computer program product as described in claim 23 further comprising before said retrieving instructions (h), instructions displaying at least one rule from the rules repository in response to a rule request.

Claim 25 (Previously presented) The computer program product as described in claim 24 wherein said instructions (a) further comprise instructions for establishing a plurality of categories of rules and instructions storing the rules in the plurality of categories according to rule type.

Claim 26 (Previously presented) The computer program product as described in claim 23 wherein said displaying instructions further comprise instructions displaying a category of validation rules.

Claim 27 (Previously presented) The computer program product as described in claim 26 further comprising before said displaying instructions, instructions receiving the rule request containing an identification of a specific validation rules category.

Claim 28 (Previously presented) The computer program product as described in claim 23 wherein said retrieving instructions (h) further comprise: instructions receiving a description of a desired rule, the description containing the rule category; instructions searching the repository for rules matching the rule description; instructions displaying all rules matching the rule description; and instructions retrieving a rule selected from the displayed rules matching the rule description.

Claim 29 (Previously presented) The computer program product as described in claim 23 further comprising before said retrieving instructions (h): instructions receiving a validation rule descriptor; instructions searching the rules repository for rules matching the rule description; instructions determining whether there are any rules that match the validation rule description; instructions sending a query to the user to create a new rule when no rule matches the validation rule descriptor; and instructions retrieving a newly created rule.

Claim 30 (Previously presented) The computer program product as described in claim 23 further comprising after said retrieving instructions (h), instructions incorporating the retrieved rule into the electronic form.

Claim 31 (Currently amended) The computer program product as described in claim 30 wherein said incorporating instructions further comprise:

- instructions identifying a field in the electronic form;
- instructions attaching the selected rule to the identified form field; ~~and~~
- instructions retrieving validation software for the attached rule; ~~and~~;
instructions automatically installing the retrieved validation software for an attached rule.